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## Ire Over Czechs Shouldn't Blind U.S. to Its Interests

THE SOVIET invasion of Czechoslovakia has inevitably and properly impelled a re-examination of U.S. policy in several areas. A purely rational argument would insist that the strategic situation is unchanged. Furthermore, any policies which assumed the primacy of humanitarian motives on the part of the government of the Soviet Union, or of any other super-power, are unrealistic from the start.

But our feelings are not so cold-blooded and every instance of the actual use of force in the service of an overriding national interest is a chilling reminder of the primitive frailty of the fabric of world culture.

The Johnson Administration is too impatient and too pragmatic to be distracted from its pursuit of realistic settlements on the vital issues of arms control and completing the task of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty. The President has far more freedom than candidates Nixon or Humphrey to pass over a popular wave of frustration at the impossibility of effective intervention on behalf of the Czechs. He can focus on the reality that arms settlements are vital to our self-interest and must be to the other side, as well, if they are to have any hope of being concluded. Nothing we do in this area is in any sense a moral approbation of Soviet militarism, any more than the air transport agreements are a Communist acceptance of capitalist economics.

NEVERTHELESS, it is a well-documented part of human nature that frustration leads to cutting off your nose to spite your face. We do not have to look far to see this process, despite the remarkable probity with which the present Administration has reacted to the Czech crisis. Secretary of State Dean Rusk was quoted last week as scrutinizing the entire U.S.-Soviet educational and cultural exchange program to find a way to

demonstrate our displeasure.

It would take a clear head and a real love of art not to be galled by a performance of the Bolshoi Ballet in the midst of a crisis of Soviet aggression. But the peak of the crisis will soon pass and, in the long run, the success of American idealism may depend on this clarity. The Bolshoi Ballet is not the culprit that ordered the Red army into Prague. Nor are many other elements of Soviet society, and least of all just those elements which are involved in the exchange programs.

There remains a twisted argument for blaming Soviet scientists and intellectuals. In recent months, they have formed the forefront of a liberal resurgence, making unprecedented demands for the free expression of criticisms of the regime. Many Czechs believe that at least one motive for the military occupation of their country was a reaction to the liberal revolt in the Soviet Union.

ONE MORE THEORY of Soviet policy cannot be disregarded, that it was based on misinformation, an uncritical acceptance of their own propaganda, with re-

spect both to German military intentions and to Czech popular reaction to Soviet "protection."

On any of these theories, we all benefit from every opportunity for Soviet citizens to see the real world outside—and by the same arguments for us to see them as people beyond the cloak of a paranoid government.

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